

# The Fire Fighter Gazette

Issue 10

October 1997

## Fire and Emergency Services Conference

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The second annual DoD Fire and Emergency Services Conference was held in Dallas, Texas from 22 - 29 August, 1997. The week started with sub-committee meetings on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, including the training, vehicle and readiness committees. On Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, members were able to go downtown to attend activities associated with the International Association of Fire Chief's (IAFC) Conference, which ran in concurrence with our conference. Literally thousands of vendors set up exhibits in the Dallas Convention Center to display the very latest in technological advances in our career field. On both Saturday and Sunday, seminars were conducted on a variety of subjects including fire ground tactics, water supply, and even terrorist activities. On Monday, the *Air Force Fire Protection Quality Council* met, as well as the *Fire and Emergency Services Quality Working Group* (comprised of each DoD service component top fire representative), the *Army FIRMS Automation Task Force*, the *Joint DoD and ARFF Working Group*, and the *IAFC Federal/Military Section Business Group*. All in all, a very busy day around the hotel as it swarmed with DoD fire folks from around the globe. I found it to be extremely interesting to "network" with not only Air Force fire chiefs, but those from our sister services, including host nation local national

(Continued on page 2)



### Need Your Help ....

As always, we would like to solicit your articles or questions, so here is how you can get in touch with us: 510 CES/CEF, 6202 Pine Drive, USAF Academy, CO 80840. Our phone numbers are: Commercial: (719) 333-2051, DSN 333-2051, and FAX: (719) 333-3740, DSN 333-3740. If possible, article submissions should include a Word For Windows file on floppy disk. Another way to get in touch with of us is through E-Mail:

**ernst.piercy@usafa.af.mil**

Using this method, you can attach your articles right to the message! We are also on the World Wide Web, and would love to have you visit us:

**<http://www.usafa.af.mil/fire-dept>**

A description of our department, vehicles, equipment, SOPs and many links are located on our page.

#### Inside this Issue ...

Training Sub-Committee	3
Quality Council/DoD Awards Luncheon	4
Fire News/To Breathe or Not to Breathe	6
"I put on my uniform" / Contracting Out?	7

## Conference ...

*(Continued from page 1)*

fire chiefs that, were in attendance. I spoke with fire chiefs from both Germany and Japan. Tuesday was by far the busiest day of the conference, as seminars and guest speakers were tightly scheduled from 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM. The DoD General Session included opening ceremonies, introductions and welcome by **Mr. Kevin King** (Director, Marine Corps Fire and Emergency Services), and an excellent motivational speaker – the focus of his speech was on working as a team, and the importance of management~labor relations. He also asked us, as we move into the next century, to not be afraid of “thinking outside of the box”. He said if someone wants to give us additional responsibilities and taskings (he cited EMS response and street sweeping as examples), and they want to give up resources to go with those taskings, why not willingly accept them? Seminars presented on this day were as varied as the presenters themselves. **Dr. Denis Onieal** (Superintendent, National Fire Academy), gave an overview of Wingspread IV, a meeting held every ten years to come to consensus on significant issues facing the fire service nationally. **Mr. William Killen** (Director, Navy Fire and Emergency Services), gave a briefing on the Navy’s plans to consolidate and regionalize some of its fire departments. **Dr. Jerry Mothershead** (Special Advisor for Rehospital Care), discussed the role of the fire fighter within EMS response. He was recently asked to put together an AdHoc committee of fire fighters and medical professionals to study our role in this arena. A seminar on the DoD Fire Fighter Physical Fitness Program was presented by representatives from Brooks AFB, which discussed the future of this important program. **Mr. Charles Smith**, (DoD Assistant for Fire and Emergency Services) emphasized the importance of collecting vital statistical data. **Mr. Vince Lisa** of the Naval Safety Center was also available to answer questions about the DFIRS program. More information on this seminar is available in a separate article in this newsletter. **MSgt Robert Massie** (USMC, Camp LeJeune, NC) discussed the USMC Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force – a team that responds to worldwide chemical and biological incidents to provide local civilian/military authorities with management support. **Major Robin Davis** (Chief, Operations Flight, Langley AFB) gave an intense presentation on the Khobar Towers incident, including personal insight to this tragic event. **Captain John Enyeart** (Flight Commander DoD Fire Academy, Goodfellow AFB) gave an interesting overview of the Fire School and its capabilities. Proposed curriculum and program changes were briefed to the overflow crowd in this seminar. **Mr. Hugh Pike** also had a full room as he briefed the fire chiefs about the latest and greatest about the Fire Fighter Certification Program. Please see the related article in this newsletter to answer your questions about the Fire Officer III and IV grandfathering. **Brigadier General Larry Enyart** (Mobilization Assistant to the Air Force Civil Engineer) was the keynote speaker during this conference, and presented the group with a stimulating and motivational speech. The day’s activities wrapped up with a presentation by **Mr. Charles Smith** and **Mr. Kevin King** on the

Strategic Planning Session held earlier this year at the National Fire Academy. Wednesday was a bit slower than the previous two days, and the fire chiefs were able to attend the IAFC closing ceremonies downtown. Very emotional, and yet extremely motivating presentation by our civilian counterparts! The afternoon was reserved specifically for team building, as **CMSgt Jim Podolske** (HQ AFCESA) did a superb job organizing a DoD Golf Outing, 5K Fun Run, a racquetball and a volleyball tournament. Fun was had by all, and injuries were kept to a minimum! The day was not over though, as a Texas-style Barbecue was held in the hotel that evening. Ribs, chicken and sliced beef were the order of the day, as country music played and trophies were awarded for the afternoon’s activities. Winners included “**Team Hawaii**” in Volleyball, **Chief Tom Boyce** in the 5K Run, and **MSgt Bob Simpson** took the racquetball tournament. Thursday and Friday were reserved for MAJCOM and service component meetings, although the DoD Awards Luncheon on Wednesday provided an excellent break in the activities. We recognized our best - please see the related article on this event as well. All in all, an excellent conference this year. Lots of work during the day, and the opportunity to network with our peers in the evening - bravo to the folks at AFCESA for putting together the second annual DoD Fire and Emergency Services Conference - definitely the best yet! Special thanks go out to **CMSgt Jim Podolske** and **MSgt Tracy Reed**, whose efforts did not go unnoticed in creating this successful event. (note: the minutes of the vehicle and readiness committees were not available at the time of publication. We will include them in the January, 1998 edition of this newsletter).



## Update

**Senior Airman Trisha B. Shoup**, the airman-in-charge of the fire alarm communication center at Kunsan Air Base, was nominated for and selected as one of the twelve outstanding Airman of the Year! Way to go!

# Training Sub-Committee Meeting

Here are the unofficial (draft) minutes of the DoD Fire Protection Training and Education Sub-Committee meeting held in Dallas, 22 August 1997:

1. **Mr. George Hall** of Wright Laboratories gave the group an overview of research and development efforts, including a statement of mission and how funding is obtained.
2. Current projects include an elevated waterway for ARFF, dual agent capability and anti-rollover protection. On the structural side, a new personal alert safety system is being developed, new fire fighting ensembles and infra-red vision technologies are being explored.
3. Also being tested are new types of virtual reality training; within 18 months the first prototype will be placed into service at Goodfellow AFB. Scenarios are being developed for structural fire fighting, F-15 egress and a leaking tanker truck. Incorporated in this technology will be odor, smoke and heat lamps to enhance the training experience. Possible scenarios will include backdrafts, flashovers and explosions. The "over the shoulder" filming is complete; these real-life films will ensure realism in the training. Future scenarios being considered are ventilation, confined space rescues, auto extrication and the use of tools and equipment. Although the initial prototype will only have single individuals working an incident, development of team training is planned.
4. **Mr. Hall** gave a brief overview of Halon replacement; bottom line – there are no acceptable replacement products on the market, so don't purchase them!
5. **CMSgt Podolske** gave a briefing on the new Hazardous Materials Support Software – the two significant changes are: the awareness portion has been updated to meet the 1997 standard, and a Jeopardy-style game has been added to aid in the instruction and evaluation of students. The updated materials are at IFSAC for accreditation. Operations and Technician level software will be updated as soon as the new NFPA HAZMAT Response Handbook is available.
6. Potential HAZMAT students were reminded to read the study guide in its entirety - the CerTest questions were taken from there and the slides!
7. New CerTest version 2.2 was sent to the MAJCOMs for distribution to the bases on 30 June 1997. Some of the new features include:

- Multiple unlock capability
- New certification tests -- parallel CDC tests closely
- New procedural guide is on the CD ROM (read it!)

8. Old versions of CerTest should be destroyed after the new version is up and running.

9. A new program, known as *ConTest* will be distributed soon – it is a CD ROM with Cat I and Cat II readiness training. As a result, the nine contingency tests were deleted from the latest version of CerTest.

10. **CMSgt Podolske** briefed the group that although challenging a hazardous materials CerTest has been an option in the past, that will not be an option in the near future – students will have to take the course.

11. The new Career Field Education and Training Plan has been published for military and civilian fire fighters, although the one for the civilians is already outdated. An update is forecasted for the very near future. For those who do not have a copy, it is posted on the Air Force Reserve Command's fire protection web page.

12. A requirement for Fire Inspector I certification will be forthcoming for Prime BEEF teams, including follow-on teams.

13. **Mr. Cheek** and **MGYSgt Thompson** of the DoD Fire Academy gave a briefing on the status of the pits at the Academy:

14. During the period of Feb - Mar 1998, the large aircraft pit is scheduled to be shut down for 4 weeks. Possible solutions are to graduate students with a training deficiency, or to develop a work around to ensure no students have to pit fire training somewhere else. It is the proposal of this committee to the Quality Council that the school use its 4700 ft<sup>2</sup> pit (300 ft<sup>2</sup> less than required by the standard) to train the students while the larger pit is out of service. Furthermore, a simulator will be constructed and installed in the smaller pit to satisfy training requirements for wheel and APU fires. CMSgt Podolske will carry this recommendation to the Quality Council.

15. A reminder was given to the group that Fire Instructor I is not a pre-requisite to attending the Fire Rescue course, although a current physical and a signature from the fire chief is! For out of cycle requests for this, or any course, contact **Don Britt**, DSN 597-1334. Have the course number and title available when you call.

16. The Rescue course will be shut down for 8 classes while it is undergoing a major re-write. It was determined that since we are now training to the Fire Fighter II level in the basic course, some subjects were taught to a higher level than in the rescue course.

17. The HAZMAT course will be shut down for 2 classes to bring it up to the 1997 standard.

18. **Mr. Piercy** tasked the group with putting together success stories, as well as past reasons for failure, for the DoD Certification Program. These successes and failures will be published and distributed to the fire departments in an effort to enhance the process.

Here are the unofficial (draft) minutes of the Air Force Fire Protection Quality Council held in Dallas, 25 August

# Quality Council Meeting

1997:

1. The bottom up review results have not yet been released:

a. ARFF requirements will probably be based on NFPA 403. This will change response times and ARFF staffing will be reduced to two. Staffing will be provided for one water tender. Times may be measured to the mid point on the runway versus the end. Fighter and training bases will have three ARFF vehicles, two of which will be staffed.

b. The UTC size may change from 12 to 10, or 24 to 20, as a result of crew size reductions.

c. The commercial vehicle buy program will result in a savings of 135K per ARFF vehicle versus purchasing a vehicle built to military specifications.

d. There are 44 vehicles in the 98/99 vehicle buy program.

e. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) final report has not yet been published, although no changes are expected to structural fire fighting missions.

2. Fire Officer III and IV grandfathering will proceed as planned, using the guidance issued in the most recent e-mail from AFCESA. The only change is that the requirement for a 24-man department was deleted. Criteria and forms are available at the Air Force Reserve Command Fire Protection Web Page.

3. WR/ALC (Mary Zampa) needs the location and serial number for all P-19s in order to put together the plan for the retro-fit kits (halon replacement agent).

4. AMC proposed replacing P-20s with HUMVEEs for deployments. AMC have put together rules for deploying civilians. These rules are available via e-mail, upon request.

5. Due to course revisions, the Rescue course and the HAZMAT course will be shut down for a short period. Dates to be announced.

6. The P-23 travel team has been discontinued. A computer based instructional CD ROM is under development that will replace the team.

7. There is an IG special interest item – NFPA 1500 programs will be looked at at approximately 16 bases.

8. DoDI 6055.6 should be published by the first of the year. AFI 32-2001 is available now, on the Air Force Electronic Publishing Library.

9. A proposal was made to develop a business plan for the Quality Council. A meeting will be held at the Air Force Academy at a later date.

10. EMS was discussed by the group; it was decided that if fire protection were to absorb this function, then the medical community would have to provide resources and program oversight.

11. The state of fire protection systems maintenance was discussed. Air Force Reserve Command is considering a plan to have fire protection personnel begin performing first echelon maintenance during facility inspections.

12. Hazardous Materials response was also discussed. It is the fire chief who must perform a risk assessment of the individual installation to determine if a technician-level mission is present. The chief, in turn, then appoints team members; only those members are *required* to have technician-level training.

13. AMC has an airfield risk assessment plan; copies are available by contacting their fire protection office via e-mail.

14. The next Quality Council Meeting is tentatively scheduled for November/December at Goodfellow AFB, Texas.

## DoD Awards Luncheon

The first annual DoD Awards Luncheon was held in conjunction with this year's Fire and Emergency Services Conference to honor the best of the best. **Mr. Kevin King** hosted the event, the **Scott AFB Fire Department Honor Guard** did a superb job posting the colors, **CMSgt Podolske** conducted the fallen fire fighter's ceremony, and, after lunch, the winners in each of the following categories were announced: DoD military and civilian fire fighter of the year, and the DoD fire department of the year. The nominees for DoD Military Fire Fighter of the Year were: Army - **Corporal Damon Semington**; Navy - **ABH3 Joseph F. Cavelero**; Air Force - **SSgt Michael L. Rosser**; Marine Corps - **Sergeant Daryl J. Buss**; and Coast Guard - **DC3 Robert Dauphinais**. And the winner is – **SSgt Michael L. Rosser** of Rhein-Mein AB, Germany! The nominees for the DoD Civilian Fire Fighter of the Year were: Army - **Mr. Craig Nixon**; Navy - **Mr. Thomas B. Lovett**; Air Force - **Mr. Bret D. Stohr**; Marine Corps - **Mr. Randy S. Leazer**; Defense Logistics Agency - **Mr. Michael L. Davis** and Coast Guard - **Mr. William G. Myers**. The winner is - **Mr. Bret D. Stohr** of McChord AFB, Washington!! The nominees for the best DoD Fire Department of the Year were: Army - Hawthorne Army Depot, Hawthorne, Nevada; Navy - Consolidated Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan; Air Force - Yokota Air Base, Japan; Marine Corps - Camp Pendleton, California; Defense Logistics Agency - Distribution Region West, San Joaquin Site,

(Continued on page 5)

## Fire News

### Fire Protection Management in the Electronic Age

Fire protection managers today have the world at their fingertips, literally. With the click of a button you can go anywhere in the world and collect information about almost anything you can imagine.

We've all dreamed of the day when we'd be able to communicate with our counterparts and peers where ever they are. We've longed for the day when we'd be able to send information, letters, books, newsletters, quickly to the recipients. We've drooled at the thought of having access to the world's technical library. The time is now! The Internet provides all this, plus more. It provides the means to send mail, to talk, to send notes, to gather information, to exchange information, to look at the person you're talking too, to view films, and on and on.

You don't have to use all the capability – not many people do. You do need to have a basic ability to use e-mail and to use the Internet to research information. It isn't that difficult to do and there's self-taught experts in every fire department. If you aren't using the capabilities, you need too!

In the case of the Air Force Reserve Command, we have created one of the most useful Internet sites available to Air Force fire fighters (all fire fighters for that matter). We've searched the Internet and provided links to really good stuff out there. Also, we've provided valuable information for you to download and use in your own department, or personally if you need it. We didn't create most of the information but we found stuff that others have created and are willing to share with you. If you have anything that you've invented that has helped you do your job, and you're willing to share it, please send it to me and I'll handle it from there. The URL for our web site is:

<http://www.afres.af.mil/~fire/pages/firehome.htm>

**DONALD W. WARNER**  
COMMAND FIRE CHIEF  
AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND  
e-mail: donald.warner@afres.af.mil

### Fire Officer Certification

Information provided by HQ AFCEA/CEXF:

We are now ready to issue DoD fire fighter certifications for Fire Officer III and IV. The following criteria applies to these levels, as of 1 June 1997:

**Fire Officer III** (civilian):

1. Be certified as a Fire Officer II and be a
  2. GS-081 series employee (or contract equivalent) and
  3. be a Deputy Chief/Asst Chief of Ops & Readiness or
  4. be an Asst Chief of Operations or Training or
  5. be a Fire Chief
- and have met this criteria two of the last five years.

**Fire Officer III** (military)

1. Be certified as a Fire Officer II and
  2. Minimum Grade of E-6 and
  3. be a Deputy Chief/Asst Chief of Ops & Readiness or
  4. be an Asst Chief of Operations or Training or
  5. be a Fire Chief
- and have met this criteria two of the last five years.

**Fire Officer IV** (civilian)

1. Be certified as a Fire Officer II and be a
  2. GS-081 series employee (or contract equivalent) and
  3. Chief of Fire Protection for a Major Air Command, or
  4. Fire Protection Specialist for a MAJCOM, or
  5. Fire Chief
- and have met this criteria two of the last five years.

**Fire Officer IV** (military)

1. Be certified as a Fire Officer II and
  2. E-8 or E-9, and
  3. Assigned to a MAJCOM, or
  4. Be a Fire Chief
- and have met this criteria two of the last five years.

All individuals applying for certification must provide documentation (SF 50, appraisals, EPRs, etc) that will allow for a fair evaluation of qualifications, accompanied by a letter signed by the fire chief stating the individual is qualified at the levels requested. All requests for certificates are to be approved by your MAJCOM fire protection staff before submission. If you need additional information, contact **Mr. Pike**, DSN 523-6214.

### DoD Award Winners (con't)

*(Continued from page 4)*

Stockton, California; and Coast Guard - Training Center, Petaluma, California. And the winner is - **Yokota Air Base, Japan (Fire Chief - Bill Moore)!** Congratulations to each of the nominees and the winners!

## Fire News

### Promotions

Congratulations to **Gerald Johnson** assigned to Hickam AFB. It was announced that he made TSgt on the supplement cycle.

**Thomas Wade**, Eglin AFB was promoted to GS-9.

**James Laramore** was promoted to GS-9 at Eglin AFB.

**Paul Cosges**, from Seymour Johnson AFB, was promoted to Assistant Chief at Selfridge ANGB.

**Mr. Jim Clifford** recently moved from the Ass't Chief, Fire Prevention position to Ass't Chief, Operations, and **Mr. Tony**

**Prough** was promoted from Lead Fire Fighter to Ass't Chief, Fire Prevention at Minot AFB.

If you happen to see **SMSgt Mark Giuliano**, stop and congratulate him on his selection to Chief! Mark was notified that he was selected on the supplemental list. Mark has done a tremendous job as a part of the USAFE team and is very deserving of this promotion. Phone calls of congratulations can be made to the RAF Mildenhall fire department at DSN 238-2408. I'm sure Mark is anxious to enter the assignment fray now!

In case you haven't heard, here are the latest Senior Master Sergeants in our career field:

<b>Bazemore, John</b>	Andersen AFB, Guam
<b>Ford, Terry</b>	Randolph AFB
<b>Fuller, Steven</b>	Little Rock AFB
<b>Ibach, Robert</b>	Sheppard AFB
<b>Mounsey, David</b>	Ellsworth AFB
<b>Pascoe, Garry</b>	Barksdale AFB
<b>Robertson, Gregory</b>	USAF Academy
<b>Roy, David</b>	Misawa AB Japan
<b>Stewart, Darryl</b>	Kunsan AB Japan
<b>Waters, Carl</b>	Elmendorf AFB

Congratulations to each of this quarter's promotees!

### To Breathe or not to Breathe? (That is the Question)

Is that an eye catching head-line or what? Now that I have your attention; in February 1997, an Integrated Process Team (IPT) met at Eglin AFB, FL to validate reported deficiencies and identify potential problems with the recently fielded Interspiro Self-contained Breathing Apparatus. While the IPT was not tasked with evaluating our Respiratory Protection Program (RPP), their visit was the impetus behind our taking a long look at our own program; and a Process Improvement Team was born.

After examining our methods of operation, there were four main areas the team felt needed to be addressed in order to make our RPP one of the best in the Air Force. The four areas identified were: (1) certification and training requirements, (2) equipment shortfalls, (3) computerized maintenance tracing system, and (4) a standard operating procedure to capture the entire program.

The team identified two key areas dealing with the certification and training process. The first dealt with how we train our

personnel to perform technical maintenance on the Interspiro self-contained breathing apparatus. This problem was resolved by bringing in a representative from Interspiro to train 24 fire fighters from across the department. This will allow the maintenance load to be spread around and to reduce the time required to repair an air pack and get it back in service. The second area that needed definite attention was how we conduct (or our failure to) mask fit testing. An effective solution to this hospital. An agreement was finally hammered out, allowing the fire department's RPP managers to conduct the fit test for the department's personnel while the Bio-Environmental (BE) shop maintains overall responsibility for the training the RPP managers on the testing equipment annually. BE will also maintain responsibility for documenting and maintaining a record of the fit testing.

A shortage of spare parts had become a source of frustration for the individuals trying to keep our SCBAs in service. The team took a close look at the process we were using for identifying high use parts and how we can keep a better handle on our spare parts supply levels. The answer was to treat our spare parts inventory much like a bench stock. This way, whenever a part's inventory reaches a predetermined level, the RPP manager will automatically notify Logistics to reorder a specified quantity.

The most glaring problem the team faced was the complete lack of maintenance tracking system for the over 1,000 separate components (harnesses, masks, and bottles) assigned to the department. This negative in our program was quickly turned into a positive when a state of the art computer tracking system (SCBA TRAK) was acquired. This new system will track everything from hydrostatic test dates to maintenance performed on the mask, etc. This system will provide a detailed history of each SCBA component and will help in identifying any possible trends that would indicate a maintenance problem.

In closing, I would like to thank the IPT members **Mr. Wade Grimm, Mr. Paul Sutphin, Mr. Jack Remson, Mr. Buddy Dennard**, and last but not least **Mr. Ernst Piercy**, a man who's motivation skills rival those of General George S. Patton. It was their visit that prompted us to reconstruct our entire program. And to you loyal readers of the Gazette, I beg forgiveness for missing the deadline for June's edition.

(article submitted by **Mr. Dale Mosby**,  
Eglin AFB Fire Department)

## Military Service: "I put on my uniform"

A chief master sergeant sits behind his desk, just down the hall from the Operations Group Commander's office at Pope Air Force Base, NC. As the chief finishes his second cup of coffee and the last of the morning messages, the commander steps into the chief's office. "Chief," the colonel says, "I hate to ask you this, but you are needed in Southwest Asia in six days for a 90-day rotation. Can you go?" With no emotion in his voice or without even looking up, the chief replies, "I put on my uniform this morning, didn't I?" The colonel is taken aback—the chief doesn't usually talk in riddles. Has this veteran of 28 years finally gone off the deep end? The wise old protector of the enlisted corps smiles and begins to explain. "I made a promise to myself more than 20 years ago that I would only put this uniform on as long as I'm available for duty." While this may seem obvious to some Air Force members, it seems to completely escape others. Available for duty means more than the desire to negotiate and select the premium assignments or choicest TDY's. A simple transition. Available for duty requires us to go any place in the world that the president or officers appointed over us determines, at any given time. This doesn't mean we shouldn't have or receive our preferences. It doesn't mean we'll go when and where we're needed and called. This approach may seem overly simplistic; however, upon further review I think everyone can agree, when it comes to defining service to our country, the answer is just that simple. In today's world of "what can you do for me?" it's easy to lose sight of what "service to our country" is all about. Service goes far beyond the individual; it affects the well-being of our nation. Sitting in southern Georgia it's easy to forget the sacrifices we agree to endure in service to our country. Deployed to Southwest Asia, Italy or Bosnia, the sacrifices become much clearer. The bottom line is today we are an "all-volunteer force." Our force has been reduced by 30 percent in the last five years while it remains a highly-mobilized, continually-tasked organization. Everyone is vital to its continued success.

The Air Force will go on tomorrow with or without any single one of us; however, the efficiency of any one of its specific units may be adversely affected by the loss of only a few. All of us have the responsibility to report our availability for duty. If someone has a family problem or special circumstances that precludes them from being available, they need to report it immediately and especially prior to being asked to deploy. If any single member does not deploy when called upon, another member is forced to fill the slot. Anytime someone cannot or will not deploy, the ripple effect is felt throughout the Air Force. Everyone's family would like them to be home for the holiday's. I can't think of anyone who would intentionally miss their child's graduation. We're all aware of the pain of losing a loved one is compounded by the grief of not being at their side in the final moments. Military members are asked to sacrifice all of this continuously. What we must remember is that we are serving our nation and we are all volunteers. It is not easy—no one said it would be. The leadership of our country depends on all of us being as good as our word. I believe each of us need to take a good look in the mirror and ask "am I available for

duty?" If the answer is yes, then continue as the true professional you're expected to be. If the answer is no, you need to immediately notify your supervisor or commander. Your next step is to determine if your non-availability is temporary or permanent. You then face the toughest question: should you resign, separate or retire? There are no pat answers.

Everyone must decide for themselves. Just as the chief, I too put on my uniform today and **I am available for duty.**

(Article by Senior Master Sergeant John Drew,  
submitted by CMSgt Gene Rausch)

## Contracting Out?

As stated in our lead story, Mr. Charles Smith and Mr. Vince Lisa gave a briefing on the importance of the DoD Fire Incident Reporting System. Here is the bottom line - if we cannot convince the GAO and Congress that we have the ability to gather and study data (including the "back log" of responses from 1995), the DoD fire service is opening themselves up to the repeal of the "contracting out" law.

*Editor's Comment* - these words were spoken in this seminar, not by this writer - the real question here is - has your department provided all of the statistical data requested by the Naval Safety Center? If not, why not? It is not too late to gather that information from 1995 (until present) and submit it! This problem has the attention of the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security), and will not simply disappear if we ignore it. Another point made in this seminar was about the Remarks Section in the DFIRS program - the more information placed in this block the better. Many fire chiefs are ignoring this block altogether! Finally, the question about report writing capability came up. Without getting into the lengthy discussion that ensued, bottom line is that we contracted for this feature, and it should be available soon - if you need data in the meanwhile - give the Naval Safety Center a call, and they will be more than happy to assist you. Everybody wants to save their job from contracting out - do you want to do your part?

